Advanced Coaching
Accelerating the Journey from Good to Great

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'Exploring the contribution of psychology to coaching.'

Advanced Coaching
Accelerating the Journey from Good to Great

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Presented by the APS Coaching Psychology Interest Group

Coaching Psychology: the science of achieving your goals

APS
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Propositions

1. Coaching works
2. Easy to be a good coach, hard to be a great coach
   - It is also easy to be a bad coach
3. Human behavior is inherently complex "people are complex and the world is messy" (Peterson, 2006)
4. Good coaching can (potentially) be defined; great coaching is inherently complex and adaptive
5. *Coachability* is almost always about *coach* ability, not the person
6. Coaching is perhaps the wrong thing to focus on….
   - Coaching is a means to an end
   - Focus on the learner and their learning and development

How do we know coaching works?

A frequently-cited study reports that 77% of coaching participants showed improved relationships with direct reports.

Does that mean that coaching is:

- – Extremely effective?
- – Extremely ineffective?

What if 77% improved when…

1. 100% had a goal of improving relationships with direct reports?

2. 50% had that goal?

3. 0% had that goal and the purpose was to improve strategic thinking and time management?

4. The ratings for everyone improved from "very ineffective" to "ineffective"?

What if 77% improved when…

5. Their coaching program consisted of
   – Three one-hour sessions provided by recently certified coaches from a two-day training program?
   – A full year of weekly coaching from certified master coaches?

6. Ratings were based on:
   – Self-report?
   – Ratings from the direct reports themselves?
   – Ratings from trained observers?

7. 12% said they didn't accomplish any of their coaching goals?

Coaching works?
Well, here's what the research says:
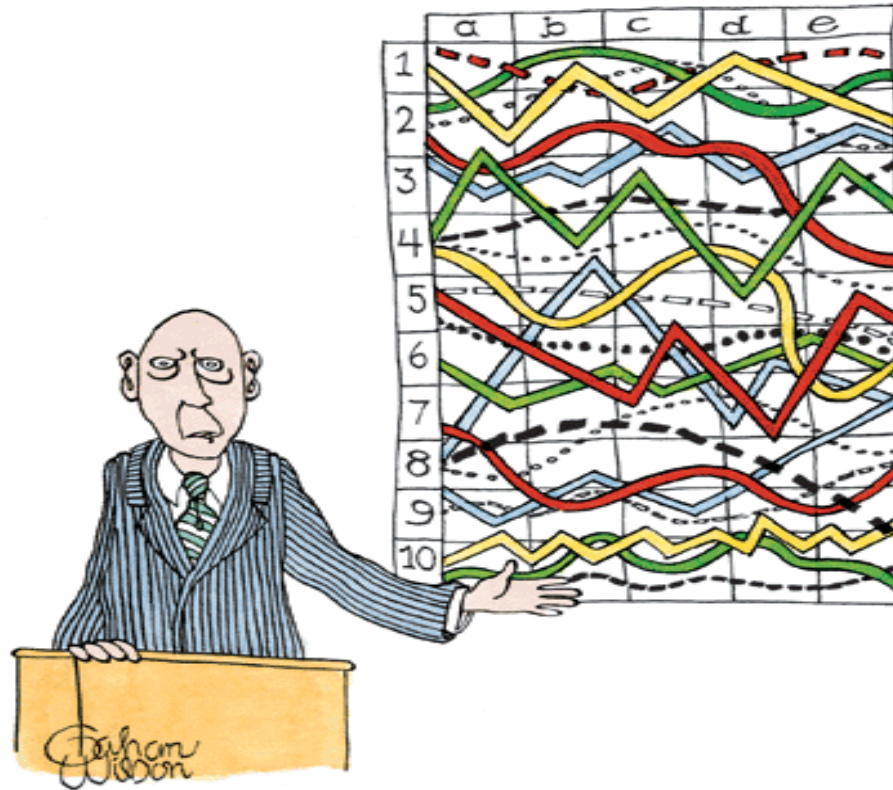
"I'll pause for a moment so you can let this information sink in."

But seriously… Coaching works

(If you don't believe me, read this: Peterson, 1993, 2010a; Peterson & Kraiger, 2004)

1. **Personal testimonials, popular press, coaches' marketing materials**

2. **Surveys and self-report ratings of participants** (Bush, 2005; Davis & Petchenik, 1998; Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker, & Fernandes, 2008; Leedham, 2005; Seamons, 2006; Thompson, 1986; Wasylyshyn, 2003; Wasylyshyn, Gronsky, & Haas, 2006)

3. **Surveys of and ratings from bosses** (Peterson, 1993)

4. **Surveys of HR purchasers / managers of coaching programs** (Dagley, 2006; Leedham, 2005; McDermott, Levenson, & Newton, 2007)

5. **Individual case studies** (Blattner, 2005; Diedrich, 1996; Hunt, 2003; Kiel, Rimmer, Williams, & Doyle, 1996; Kralj, 2001; Libri & Kemp, 2006; Natale & Diamante, 2005; Peterson, 1996; Peterson & Millier, 2005; Schnell, 2005; Tobias, 1996; Wasylyshyn, 2005; Winum, 2005)

6. **Organizational case studies** (See Clutterbuck & Megginson, 2005; Hunt & Weintraub, 2007; Jarvis et al., 2006)

7. **ROI evaluations** (Anderson, 2001; CLC, 2004; Holt & Peterson, 2006; McGovern et al., 2001; Parker-Wilkins, 2006; Phillips, 2007; Schlosser et al., 2006)

8. **Carefully designed, quasi-experimental studies** (Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2006; Finn, 2007; Finn, Mason, & Griffin, 2006; Grant, Frith, & Burton, 2009; Offermans, 2004 [see Greif, 2007]; Peterson, 1993b; Smither et al., 2003; Steinmetz, 2005 [see Greif, 2007]; Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004)

9. **Literature reviews critically evaluating the above** (De Meuse, Dai, & Lee,2010; Ely et al., 2001 ; Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006, 2007; Jarvis et al., 2006; Joo, 2005; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; Kampa & White, 2002; Levenson, 2009; Mackie, 2007; Passmore & Gibbes, 2007)

Plus some simple logic….

- **Techniques known to be effective in facilitating learning** (Jarvis et al., 2006; Latham, 2007):

  - **Goal setting** (Locke & Latham, 1990; 2002)

  - **Communicating performance expectations** (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999)

  - **Feedback** (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; London, 1997)

  - **Enhancing self-efficacy** (Bandura, 1997)

  - **Behavioral practice** (Druckman & Bjork, 1991)

  - **Spaced practice and repetition**

  - **Reflection** (Burkey & Linley, 2007; Seibert & Daudelin, 1999)

  - **Accountability** (Holton & Baldwin, 2003)

  - **A trusting, supportive relationship** (Lambert & Barley, 2002; Mahoney, 1991)

Not to mention some of the most incredibly compelling and under-appreciated reasons why coaching may be so effective… Which I won't… Unless you ask me…

- Coaching is *adaptive*

- Coaches learn as they work; tailor their approach to what's most useful for the person
  - Simply ask people what would be helpful
  - Incorporate participant reactions and feedback on what's useful and what's not

- Coaches get multiple tries

- Cumulative benefit of multiple approaches

With one small problem…

We don't really know *how* or why it works, or what works best, or whether one approach is better than others….

"Great coaches ask powerful questions"

- And so do good coaches, mediocre coaches, and bad coaches….

- Sampling on the dependent variable:
  - Selecting the people we study based on their success, e.g.,
    - Studying great coaches
    - Benchmarking against the most admired companies

- We need to know what differentiates effective/successful coaching/coaches from less effective coaching/coaches.

Good → Great? Five stages of expertise (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986)

1. *Novices*: Focus on accomplishing immediate tasks, typically require clear <u>rules</u> which they follow closely.

2. *Advanced beginners*: Use rules as <u>guidelines</u>, applying them in new situations, but not able to handle exceptions or unforeseen problems.

3. *Competent* performers: Form <u>conceptual models</u> of what they are doing; can handle more complex situations based on their experience; typically rely on heuristics or surface features. ("good")

4. *Proficient* performers: Have experienced a wide variety of situations and challenges; see the big picture, monitor their own performance, and interpret <u>underlying principles</u> to adjust their behaviors based on the context; can handle relatively novel or complex situations.

5. *Experts*: Able to identify and solve problems <u>intuitively</u>, with little explicit analysis or planning; see underlying patterns effortlessly and adapt principles to generate and apply appropriate solutions, <u>even to complex and unique situations</u>, in such a way that they generate consistently superior performance. ("great")

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Novice → Competent → Expert

Novice Guided by rules and tools
- How do I do this?
- What do I do next?

Competent Guided by personal experience and models
- What do I think would be helpful?

Expert Guided by the client and the context
- What does the learner need?
- What will be most useful to this person?

Puzzle, problem, or mystery? (Lazar & Bergquist, 2003; Snowden & Boone, 2007)

Puzzle
One-dimensional, can be clearly defined
Has a correct answer, clear criteria
Simple – clear cause and effect

Problem
Multidimensional; multiple possible answers, reasonable criteria
Requires judgment, discernment; not necessarily more data
Complicated – cause and effect are discoverable

Mystery
No correct answer; emergent, unpredictable
Defy definition and suitable criteria
Complex – can't know the effect until you have the cause

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Coaching maturity (Clutterbuck, 2010)

Models-based   How do I adapt my technique or model to this circumstance?

Process-based   What's the best way to apply my process in this instance?

Philosophy-based   (a specific theoretical framework): What can I do to help the client do this for themselves?

Managed eclectic   How do we allow the issue and the solution to emerge in whatever way they will? How do I select from the wide choice available to me?

Why is it easy to be a <u>good</u> coach? (Peterson, 2010b)

1. External, objective perspective
   - Validate or challenge assumptions
   - Offer new perspectives

2. Create space for reflection, thoughtful planning

3. Positive, encouraging relationship itself is often a vehicle for change

4. First steps of change are often easy and obvious

5. Provides accountability
   - Follow-up conversation
   - Going public with one's commitment

Why is it easy to be a <u>good</u> coach?

6. Readily available coaching tools (e.g., 360, MBTI) and models (e.g., GROW)

7. Many easy-to-leverage backgrounds and transferable skills: Psychology (I/O, clinical, counseling, social, developmental, etc.), HR, OD, trainer, consultant, manager, teacher…

8. Coaches get multiple tries

Why is it so easy to <u>remain</u> a good coach?

9. Sometimes good is good enough

10. Coaches fall in love with their tools

11. Want to maintain a great relationship that is mutually rewarding; reluctant to really stretch, challenge client

12. Easy to place blame elsewhere when it doesn't work, rather than ask yourself what you could have done differently

It's also easy to be a *bad* coach...

- Hold their own agenda too tightly

- Lack maturity, perspective, experience, EQ, etc.

- Dependent on simplistic rules and tools, e.g., Coaches ask powerful questions

- Impatient or easily bored

Development Pipeline

Necessary conditions for systematic development (Peterson, 2006, 2010a)

INSIGHT

Do they know what they need to develop to be more effective?

MOTIVATION

Are they willing to invest the time and energy it takes?

CAPABILITIES

Do they have the skills and knowledge required for success?

REAL-WORLD PRACTICE

Do they take advantage of opportunities to use their skills where it matters?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Is someone paying attention to the person's progress and results?

Are there meaningful consequences?

Why is it so hard to become a *great* coach?

1. Long cycle-time with slow, distal outcome feedback

   – Immediate feedback is often deceptive

   – Difficult to connect any specific factor to outcomes

2. Complex, multifaceted process

   – **Probabilistic**: Nothing works 100% of the time; everything works some times

   – **Pleiotropic**: Same coaching behavior can produce different outcomes

   – **Polygenic**: Different coaching behaviors may produce same outcome

   *** Coaches get multiple tries, but we're not necessarily good at extracting the right lessons

Confirmation bias (Kahneman, 2011)

"There is evidence from psychology that people are better equipped to confirm beliefs than to challenge them, even when they have no vested interest in the beliefs." (Gavetti & Rivkin, 2005, p. 59)

- When I am successful, it's clear evidence that my approach works. When I'm not successful, it's clear that something external got in the way…

Fundamental attribution error

- More likely to attribute personal success to our own skill and personal failure to extenuating circumstances.
- Tend to explain other people's actions by their character traits with little regard for the power of circumstances

Why is it so hard to become a *great* coach?

3. Overwhelming knowledge-base from diverse, multifaceted disciplines: Executive Coaching Forum (2008) competency model

   a. **Psychological knowledge**: Personality, motivation, learning and behavior change, adult developmental theories, stress management, emotional intelligence, and social psychology

   b. **Business acumen**: Basic business practices and financial concepts, management principles and processes, and human resource management

   c. **Organizational knowledge**: Organizational structures and functions, organizational design, organizational culture, team effectiveness, leadership models, systems theory, consulting theory and practices, business ethics, and leadership development

   d. **Coaching knowledge**: Executive coaching models and theories, coaching competencies, specific coaching practices (e.g., managing confidentiality, assessment, goal setting), various roles of a coach, coaching research, and developing oneself as a coach.

Why is it so hard to become a *great* coach?

4. Some aspects of coaching are seductive….

- Insight and giving advice are relatively easy, quick, tangible
  - Something the coach can directly impact and get credit for

- Real-World Practice is often slow, tedious, frustrating, unpredictable, hard work
  - The person has to do the hard work; rarely does the coach get much credit
  - Absolutely necessary for real change

- Great coaching appears relatively effortless
  - The person feels like they're doing most of the work
  - The coach doesn't get as much credit for specific actions

Learning is easy, real change is hard

"The crux of the problem is that learning and performance are not the same… procedures that enhance performance during training may or may not enhance long-term retention and transfer; conversely, procedures that introduce difficulties for the learner and impair performance during training may foster durable and flexible posttraining skills"

(Druckman & Bjork, 1991, pp. 24-25)

Why is it so hard to become a *great* coach?

5. **Demanding requirements for developing mastery-level expertise**
   (Colvin, 2008; Ericsson, 2006)

   – 10,000 hours or more of practice for complex behaviors

   – *Deliberate* practice & reflection

     • Specific goals to improve performance

     • Critically examine minute behaviors and skills - Concentrate on technique as much as outcome

     • Systematic experimentation with other approaches

     • Self-reflection and objective feedback

Does it *matter* if someone works with a good vs. great coach?

IT'S ALWAYS "GOOD DOG"— NEVER "GREAT DOG."
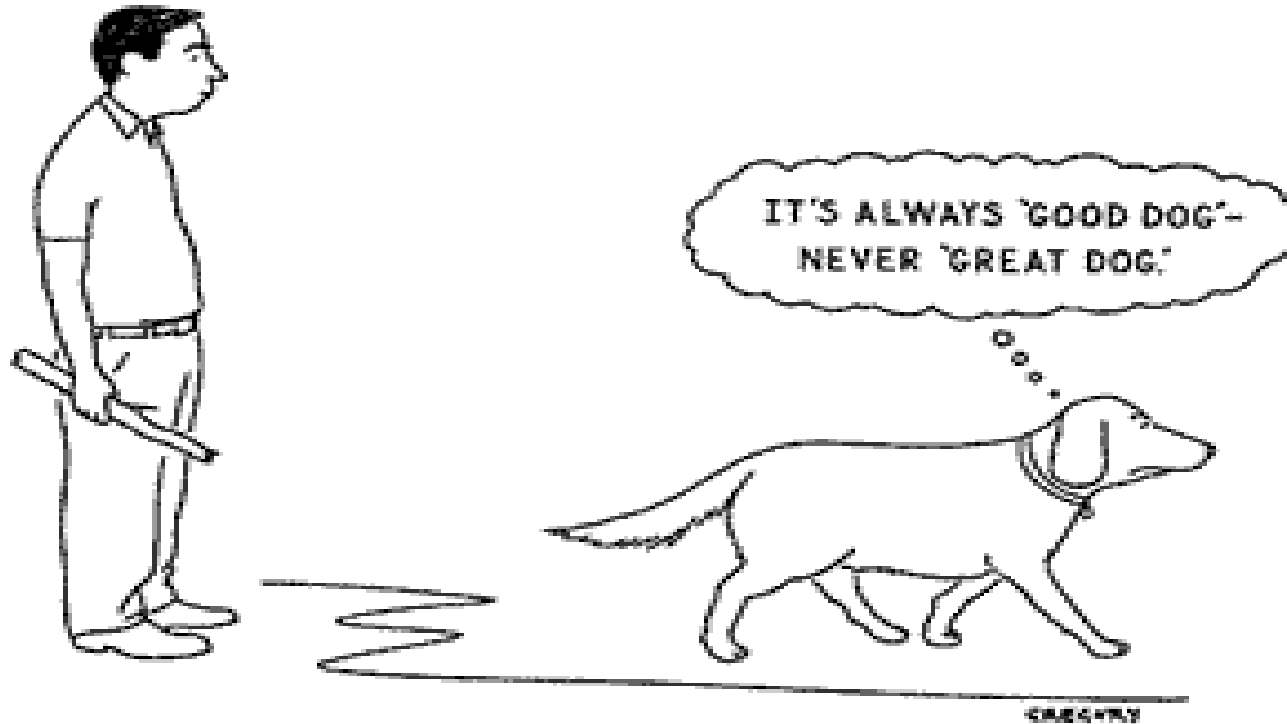
"What you don't know might kill you" (Begley & Interlandi, 2009)

"Greatness" in cancer treatment

1. Really severe cancers: Very low survival rate regardless of the treatment.

2. Relatively minor cancers: High survival rate relatively independent of treatment.

3. Moderately severe cancers: Expertise and swift action makes a huge swing in survival rates.

   – Doctors who go with their instincts or based on single past experiences are not as good as those who consistently rely on statistical averages for treatment.

   – Those who have lots of experience are better at diagnosing more precisely.

"What you don't know might kill you" (Gawande 2004)

"Greatness" in treating cystic fibrosis: Patients expected life spans, in years

- At average treatment centers: **30**
- At top centers: **46**

"…the core of Warwick's world view… excellence came from seeing, on a daily basis, the difference between being 99.5% successful and being 99.95% successful."

"The buzzword for clinicians these days is 'evidence-based practice'—good doctors are supposed to follow research findings rather than their own intuition or ad-hoc experimentation. Yet Warwick is almost contemptuous of established findings. National clinical guidelines for care are, he says, "a record of the past, and little more—they should have an expiration date."

Lore's Coachability Index

C0	Not coachable at present	Identified psychological issues
C1	Extremely low coachability	Narcissistic personality
C2	Very low coachablity	Resists or defies feedback
C3	Fair coachability	Is complacent/unmotivated to change
C4	Good coachability	Assessment comes as a wake-up call
C5	Very good coachability	Shows an earnest desire to improve
C6	Excellent coachability	Has an intrinsic need to grow

Coachability or coach ability? (Peterson, 2010b)

- The "uncoachable" are often the people who need coaching the most

- Some coaches can coach successfully on these challenges
  - The right type of coach for the need
  - The right experience and expertise, e.g., some expert coaches are well-qualified to work with narcissistic, defensive, distrustful, and difficult people (Ludeman & Erlandson, 2004; Mansi, 2009)

What it takes to become great (Colvin, 2006)

1. Approach each critical task with an explicit goal of getting much better at it.

2. As you do the task, focus on what's happening and why you're doing it the way you are.

3. After the task, get feedback on your performance from multiple sources. Make changes in your behavior as necessary.

4. Continually build new mental models of your situation. Enlarge the models to encompass more factors.
   - What is your mental model of what makes coaching effective?
   - How can you test and refine that model?

5. Do those steps regularly. Occasional practice does not work.

"This is hard work. It's not fun" (Colvin, 2010)

- Requires constant vigilance

- Draws on limited resources: (Kahneman, 2011)
  - Attention, awareness
  - PFC activity
  - Willpower

- Comfort with ambiguity, risk, mistkaes….

- Constantly questioning assumptions and choices

Reflecting on reflection: 4 directions

Look inward

- Who do I want to be?
- What am I trying to accomplish?
- What values and principles guide me?

Look outward

- What does it take to be successful?
- What matters to others?
- How do others see me?

Look back

- What new things have I tried?
- What's worked well? What hasn't?
- What have I learned so far?

Look ahead

- How is my world changing?
- What will I do differently?
- What do I need to do to keep learning?

Reflection calendar (Peterson, 2010b)

1. **Daily** (1 min.): What new thing did I do today? What did I learn? What one thing will I do differently tomorrow?

2. **Weekly** (5 min.): What progress did I make last week? What do I need to focus on next week?

3. **Monthly** (10 min.): How am I doing on my learning objectives? What do I need to do to keep growing? How will I get meaningful feedback?

4. **Quarterly** (15 min.): How am I doing on my development? What is most important for me going forward?

5. **Annually** (1 hour):
   - Am I living my life the way I want to? Am I on a path to become the person I truly want to be?
   - Where do I stand relative to what truly matters to me?
   - Where do I want to be a year from now and how do I get there?
   - What do I need to do to manage my personal and professional development more effectively? How do I make sure I'm not missing something important?

6. **Decadely** (One day every 5-10 years):
   - Who do I want to be? What values do I want to live by?
   - How do I connect to my deepest mission and purpose?
   - What do I need to do in the next 5 years to accomplish what matters most?

The more you crash, the more you learn

You have to make a **choice**. If you stay inside your comfort zone, you can make it. If you go outside, you fall. If you go on the edge, you win. Racing is **a process of learning** where that edge lies.

— Steve Podborski —

The End...

...Or just the beginning of a new journey??

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.

— *Confucius* —

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